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REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to correct a clerical error. Claim 41 had been amended to correct an informality noted by the Examiner at page 2 of the Office Action. Claims 1 and 41 has been amended to more clearly describe Applicant's invention. Support for the amendments can be found in the specification and the drawings. New claims 42 and 43 have been added. Support for the new claims can be found at page 7, lines 16-19 of the specification. No new matter has been added and no new issues have been raised by making this clarifying amendment. Applicants thank the Examiner for attending to a claim numbering error presented in the previous amendment. Claims 1, 7-10, 12, and 41-43 are pending.

Claims 1, 7-10, 12 and 41 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 1,914,736 to Coutu ("Coutu"). Claims 1 and 41 are independent.

Applicant has discovered a flexible joint assembly including a first pivot joint and second pivot joint, each including a retaining ring compressing a seal member, or sealing member, by threadably connecting to a surface of the socket adjacent to the central fluid conductor and the ball or inner member. See claims 1 and 41. As presented previously, Coutu does not describe a retaining ring compressing a seal member, or sealing member, by threadably connecting to a surface of the socket, or receiving member, adjacent to a central fluid connector.

The Examiner contends that Coutu describes this arrangement. See pages 2-5 of the Office Action. The treadable connection to the surface of the socket or receiving member adjacent to the central fluid connector refers to a surface that is interior to the receiving member. Coutu (e.g., FIG. 2) describes a threadable connection on an exterior surface of a socket. Applicants have further clarified that the surface of the socket or receiving member adjacent to the central fluid connector is an interior surface by amending claims 1 and 41 to recite that the surface is also adjacent to the ball or inner member.

Accordingly, claims 1 and 41, and claims that depend therefrom, are not anticipated by Coutu. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

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Applicants believe all claims should be allowed. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 19-4293.

Respectfully submitted,

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